



Padre Island National Seashore  
**SandDollar**



**Friday, June 18, 2004**

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## **Superintendent**

To all:

Unfortunately, our little slice of heaven here at the Seashore can be a dangerous place on occasions. It is important for me to share a serious concern I have and to assure all of us as employees are following safe practices and procedures.

Illegal smuggling of narcotics through Padre Island is a very serious and potentially dangerous situation. We are working diligently on an exciting initiative that will bring significantly increased cooperation from our federal and state law enforcement partners. While it is important to build our operational capacity, my first concern and highest priority is the safety of the employees, park volunteers, and visitors of this park.

All non-law enforcement personnel are to follow some simple precautions while conducting their duties down island. If you observe a suspicious package, bundle, or bale that you believe may be narcotics, you are to report to dispatch immediately and leave the area. Do not stay with, move, pick-up or transport any suspicious package you believe could be narcotics. Do not wait or stay with the package until rangers arrive. Report the location to dispatch, and leave the area.

The same procedure applies if you observe a gulf side landing of a motor boat. Vessels that are typically used for the delivery of narcotics to the beaches of the Seashore are open hulled boats about 23-25' with outboard engines. These vessels are known as "shark boats" or "launches" and are commonly used for fishing. You should report the landing location to dispatch and leave the area. Do not approach the vessel or try to intervene with any activity associated with these boat landings. After getting a very

safe distance away (miles) take note of any suspicious vehicles on the beach and report to rangers later.

Our law enforcement rangers and cooperating law enforcement agencies will respond to and manage these types of incidents appropriately. We are preparing written safety precautions which will be available soon.

It is unlikely most of us will ever encounter these kinds of situations while working here at Padre Island. While the likelihood is low, the potential exist, and I must insist that all of you follow these safety precautions.

Respectfully,  
Colin

Colin's schedule:

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Monday, 6/21  | – In the Park  |
| Tuesday, 6/22 | – In the Park; Squad Meeting @ 8:30 am<br>Meeting w/ Dale Sorrells         |
| Wed., 6/23    | –Change of Command Ceremony @10:00<br>Will be in the Park in the Afternoon |
| Thurs., 6/24  | – In the Park  |
| Friday, 6/25  | – In the Park  |

## *Safety Notes--*

*Your contributions are greatly appreciated for the SandDollar and the safety bulletin board. Please send safety contributions to Pat.*

*Let's continue to encourage each other to be safe.*

*Make it a safe day.*

**Employees Association News** - Jerry Seinfeld will be performing at the Selena Auditorium at 7:00 pm on Friday, July 16, 2004. Tickets go on sale May 22, 2004. If you are interested in attending please let Dimitra know. Tickets will be approximately \$45.00 + a service charge. An 8 ticket limit per purchaser is being enforced. If more than 8 people would like to go, we will definitely need an additional 'ticket buyer.'

## **Administration**

There were 52 applications for the Maintenance Worker positions. The cert will probably be received early next week (June 21).

There were about 22 applications for the dispatch position. That cert will probably be received late next week.

There were 31 qualified applicants for the temporary biotech positions. We should have the cert next week.

Jeanie has some coupons for \$6 off a one-day admission at Sea World and coupons for "two days for the price of one" They will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. The "two days for the price of one" works this way: buy one ticket, and then get a free ticket for another day.

### **FEGLI Open Season Begins in September**

Office of Personnel Management (OPM) announced that open season for the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program (FEGLI) will be from September 1 through September 30, 2004. The program consists of basic life insurance coverage and three options that include coverage for up to five times an employee's base salary plus coverage for family members. In most cases, a new federal employee is automatically covered by basic life insurance. The types and amounts of coverage available are not changing. During the open season, federal and postal employees will be able to enroll in the program or increase or change current coverage without having a physical or answering any questions about their health.

### **Changes Are Coming to the TSP Loan Program**

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) has announced that effective July 1, 2004; three changes will be made to the TSP loan program. They are: (1) A \$50 fee will be deducted from the amount of each new loan; (2) Two general purpose loans at the same time will no longer be permitted (however, one can have both a general purpose and a residential loan); and (3) Upon paying off a TSP loan, the TSP participant will not be eligible to apply for another loan of the same type for 60 days.

PAIS-E-7, Park Ranger (Protection), GS-0025-5/7/9 will be open to status employees (Merit Promotion) from June 4-21, 2004. Applications will be sent to PAIS. Another vacancy announcement will be opened in the near future by OPM and will be open to all sources (all qualified). Once I get a definite date, I will pass it on. This announcement will be for Park Ranger (Protection) at the GS-5 and GS-7 levels only with promotion potential to the GS-9. Applications must be sent to the address in the announcement (probably San Antonio). Both announcements will be posted on the HQ bulletin board and at [www.usajobs.opm.gov](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov)

### UPCOMING TEL EVENTS:

|  |            |           |             |
|--|------------|-----------|-------------|
| IDP The Interpretive Analysis Model  | 06/03/2004 | Thursday  | 12:00-4:00  |
| IDP Interpretive Techniques or How to Create Opportunities for Connections to Resource Meanings  | 06/08/2004 | Tuesday   | 12:00-4:00  |
| Administrative Grievances: What You Do Not Know Could Hurt You   | 06/10/2004 | Thursday  | 12:00-4:30  |
| Informal Interpretation Module 102: Interpretive Development Program   | 06/15/2004 | Tuesday   | 12:00-4:00  |
| IDP The Interpretive Process Model   | 06/16/2004 | Wednesday | 12:00-4:00  |
| Emerging Leaders Consortium Module 300: Congressional Actions and the NPS<br>---to receive credit, attendance on both days is required | 06/28/2004 | Monday    | 1:00-4:00   |
| Emerging Leaders Consortium Module 300: Congressional Actions and the NPS<br>---to receive credit, attendance on both days is required | 06/29/2004 | Tuesday   | 1:00-4:00   |
| Gateway Communities: Keys to Success   | 07/08/2004 | Thursday  | 12:30-3:30  |
| Working With NPS Agreements for Partnerships (Module 1): Tools for Effective Partnering  | 07/14/2004 | Wednesday | 12:00-4:00  |
| Working With NPS Agreements for Partnerships (Module 2): Developing and Managing Agreements for Partnerships                           | 07/15/2004 | Thursday  | 12:00-4:00  |
| NPS Recreation and Preservation Programs   | 07/19/2004 | Monday    | 1:30-3:30   |
| Resolving Performance Issues   | 08/10/2004 | Tuesday   | 2:00-2:00   |
| Dealing with Misconduct  | 08/10/2004 | Tuesday   | 10:00-12:00 |
| Retirement Planning for New Employees  | 08/26/2004 | Thursday  | 2:00-4:00   |
| Communication: The Key to Performance Management   | 09/09/2004 | Thursday  | 2:00-4:00   |
| From Hugger to Harasser: The True Story Behind Sexual Harassment   | 09/09/2004 | Thursday  | 10:00-12:00 |
| NPS Recreation and Preservation Programs   | 09/13/2004 | Monday    | 2:00-4:00   |
| Position Descriptions: What Every Supervisor Should Know   | 09/21/2004 | Tuesday   | 2:00-4:00   |
| Managing Performance   | 09/21/2004 | Tuesday   | 10:00-12:00 |
| Administrative Grievances: What You Do Not Know Could Hurt You   | 09/23/2004 | Thursday  | 2:00 -4:30  |
| IDP Interpretive Media Development (Module 311)  | 09/28/2004 | Tuesday   | 12:00-4:00  |

### TEL Training

Starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, trainings will be closing 5 business days before the event.

The TEL training registration has changed. For all future classes, you must notify Jeanie which course you want to take, she will have to register the site, then the employee will have to go to <http://mylearning.nps.gov> to register themselves for the class.

My Learning Manager will also have all other service wide training listed and the employee will sign up for classes/training. Once an employee registers for a class an email will automatically be sent to their supervisor for approval.

The trailer will be used for TEL training on July 8, 14, 15.

## **Facility Management**

Please be patient with the contractors installing the sprinkler system in the Headquarters building. There will be some necessary inconvenience related to noise, fumes from soldering pipes, and debris. Every effort will be made to minimize the impact on working operations. The contractors are working as quickly as possible. Thank you for your cooperation.

Facility Management has formulated a new FMSS work request form. It is more streamlined than the previous form and will incorporate both maintenance and vehicle work requests. A copy of the new form has already been sent to all employees through LotusNotes and should be used immediately. Requesters will fill out the top part of the form and personnel assigned to the request will fill out the bottom part. We think it is a much clearer and less confusing form than has been used in the past. Thank you for your cooperation in using this new form.

David Anderson, a contractor with SunCoast Construction in Corpus Christi, was here recently to look over the residence for future modifications.

Cliff Walker is coming from Santa Fe on June 24 for the final drawing of the BIB road and parking lot construction.

### **REMINDER:**

If there are striped parking slots available in the employee parking lot, please park your personal vehicle there. Staff can park in an unstriped area only if all other striped slots are full.

Designated government vehicle parking is in back of Headquarters. Please do not take up two spaces. Parking is tight in both areas. We

all want more vehicles, so we may have less parking space. Hang in there! The contractor will move the dirt piles after turtle season.

Thanks for your cooperation.

## **Interpretation**

## **Protection**

Another coyote problem has developed due to people deliberately feeding or carelessly leaving food out in Malaquite Campground. All park employees are encouraged to prevent the habituation of park animals by advising visitors not to feed any wildlife or leave food unattended. The problem is perhaps most common with park visitors feeding seagulls. Please help save park wildlife by addressing problems you see in the field while doing your daily job assignments.

Rangers are seeing increased immigrant traffic through the park and a large number of rafts down at the Mansfield Channel. We ask for your assistance in reporting suspicious activity or vehicles and caution everyone to continue to be aware of smuggling activities that are occurring on a regular basis within the park. Thanks to the bio-techs who are providing solid information regarding their observations.

Vacancies announcements have closed for the Telecommunications Equipment Operator and VUA positions. Certs for these positions are expected in the next 10 days or so. The recruitment period for the three Park Ranger are currently open with the merit promotion vacancy set to close July 21 and the OPM recruitment scheduled to close June 30th. The Operations Supervisor Position will open the week of June 21st.

Those of you who are interested in attending a Coastal Bend Aviators Baseball game sign up in the lunchroom. First hand reports by several employees suggest that games are relatively inexpensive, a lot of fun, and take place at a newly built venue in Robstown. See Randy L, Ruby, or Glenda for more details. We are looking to schedule going to a game in July.



We would like to express our condolences to Jason Lichtblau who lost a friend last Wednesday. Jason has traveled back to Pennsylvania to attend the funeral and will be back to work June 23.

## Resources Management

### Projects:

- We continue to survey colonial waterbirds each week to determine any changes in habitat use on islands in the Laguna Madre. As part of this survey, the Division contracted with Lanmon Photography to take an aerial photograph of Pelican Island in May to verify our weekly counts. A total of 778 individual White Pelicans were counted from the aerial photo, which compares to our weekly estimates of 800 individuals or over 400 nesting pairs. The 2004 count of nesting White Pelicans is the highest documented nesting since 1985 when 529 pairs were observed on this island.



Part of this success could be attributed to the removal of bufflegrass from this island last fall. The removal was accomplished by Division staff and the Exotic Plant Management Team, which helped clear habitat that had not been previously available.

## **Division of Sea Turtle Science and Recovery**

**SEA TURTLE NESTING CONTINUES** - So far this year (through June 17), 38 Kemp's ridley and two loggerhead nests have been found on the Texas coast. Linda Morehead found the 38th Kemp's ridley nest of the year for the Texas coast at the 44 mile marker on June 16, the same day the 37th ridley nest of the year was found on South Padre. This ties the record number of Kemp's ridley nests found in Texas during 2002. One more to go to break that record!!!! The first loggerhead nest recorded in Texas this year was found on South Padre Island on June 8 and the second loggerhead nest was located at Padre Island National Seashore 59.5 mile marker on June 13 by Jennifer Shelby.

Eggs from all nests except those found on South Padre Island and Boca Chica Beach are transferred to our incubation facility at Padre Island National Seashore for protected care. The eggs from South Padre and Boca Chica are transferred to a corral (screen enclosed area) on South Padre Island.

**Nest 5 was released on Monday June 14.** We released the 110 hatchlings from clutch 5 at about 7:00 am on Monday June 14. About 100 visitors and several park staff members and volunteers attended. Thank you to staff and volunteers that helped with this release!

**Nest 6, 7, and 8 are due to be released sometime(s) between about June 18 and June 23.** The hatchlings from the clutches held in our incubation facility will be released when they are physically ready and enter their infantile frenzy, typically sometime during a span of a few days that Donna predicts. The release date predictions for the nests currently held in the incubation facility are listed in the table below. This table will also be posted on the Padre Island National Seashore website ([www.nps.gov/pais/](http://www.nps.gov/pais/)), under the heading of upcoming events. As during past years, the staff and public will be invited to attend as many of our hatchling releases as possible. Public releases are



announced to begin at 6:30 am, to allow enough time for the Interpretation Division staff to give a brief program to the public before we place the hatchlings on the beach between 6:45 am and 7:00 am. Please note that we are unable to invite people to watch those releases that occur when the turtles enter their frenzy at unpredictable times, during the night, or during weather conditions that could be unsafe for the turtles or people (i.e., thunderstorms, very high tides, etc.). So, to increase the chance of seeing a release, we advise interested individuals traveling from out of town to try to attend when hatchlings from more than one nest are predicted to be released. As we near the predicted release dates for each clutch, Donna will update information about the releases on the Hatchling Hotline (telephone 361-949-7163). As during previous years, the Hatchling Hotline will be the best source of the most current information on the next release.

**PREDICTED HATCHLING RELEASE DATES FOR NESTS BEING HELD AT  
THE  
PADRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE INCUBATION FACILITY**

| <b>Nest # (Species)</b> | <b>Date Found</b> | <b>Hatchlings will Likely be Released<br/>Sometime Between these Dates</b> |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--|
| 1 (Kemp's ridley)       | April 5           | Released May 24-28   |
| 2 (Kemp's ridley)       | April 17          | Released June 6  |
| 5 (Kemp's ridley)       | April 26          | Released June 14   |
| 6, 7 (Kemp's ridley)    | May 1             | June 18-23   |
| 8 (Kemp's ridley)       | May 2             | June 18-24   |
| 10, 11 (Kemp's ridley)  | May 11            | June 27-July 2   |
| 14 (Kemp's ridley)      | May 14            | June 30-July 5   |
| 15, 16 (Kemp's ridley)  | May 17            | July 3-8   |
| 18 (Kemp's ridley)      | May 21            | July 7-12  |
| 19-24 (Kemp's ridley)   | May 22            | July 8-13  |
| 25 (Kemp's ridley)      | May 23            | July 9-14  |
| 27 (Kemp's ridley)      | May 30            | July 16-21   |
| 28-29 (Kemp's ridley)   | June 3            | July 20-25   |
| 30-34 (Kemp's ridley)   | June 5            | July 22-27   |
| 35 (Kemp's ridley)      | June 6            | July 23-28   |
| 36 (Kemp's ridley)      | June 8            | July 25-30   |
| 38 (Loggerhead)         | June 13           | August 1-6   |
| 40 (Kemp's ridley)      | June 16           | August 2-7   |

Note that nests 3, 4, 9, 12, 13, 17, 26, 37, and 39 are being held in a corral on South Padre Island, Texas

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